

## AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

On the *Patella Amæna* of Say, by Isaac Lea.—In this paper Mr. Lea gives a Synonymy, showing that the *Patella Amæna* of Say was first described by Müller, under the specific name of *Testudinalis*, Zool. Dan. p. 237; and Mr. Couthouy, having lately given an elaborate description of the animal, in the Boston Journal of Natural Science, showing that it belongs to the new genus *Patelloida*, recently established by Quoy and Gaimard; Mr. Lea argues that it should henceforth be called *Patelloida Testudinalis*.

Mr. Dunglison referred to a curious but not unique case, of a worm in the eye of a horse now in Baltimore. The particulars were contained in a letter to him from Dr. Joshua J. Cohen, of Baltimore. This entozoon is a species of filaria (see *Filaria papillosa*, Rudolphi, Synops. p. 213.), probably from  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to 4 inches in length, and situate in the aqueous humour, in which it moves about with great activity, but its motions are so constant, that it is difficult to appreciate its exact length. The great size of the anterior chamber of the horse's eye affords it ample space; and through the transparent cornea it can be observed as well as if it were in a glass vessel. The horse was sent up from Calvert county, Maryland.

Dr. Dunglison made some observations on the difficulty of accounting for its presence in this shut sack, and alluded to the different views of distinguished naturalists as to the generation of many of the lower tribes of the animal kingdom,—some presuming that they may be formed spontaneously, whilst others consider that the germs must always be received from without. The difficulty, he observes, applied to all the entozoa that infest the animal body; and this case was certainly not more difficult of explanation than that of entozoa found in the intestines of the fœtus in utero.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

## ON THE FLOWER OR FRUIT OF FERNS.

AT a recent meeting of the Royal Academy of Sciences of Berlin (March 19, 1840), Prof. Link read a paper, in continuation of his previous memoirs on the structure of Ferns, treating of the flower or fruit. The sorus is in general situated on a receptacle which, when roundish, consists entirely of short spiral vessels, so called, vermicoid bodies, similar to the thickened extremity of the leaf nerves, which might

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therefore be regarded as abortive receptacles. In the elongated receptacle, straight spiral vessels are met with. A spiral vessel never extends to the fruit. The parts which Sprengel years ago, Blume and Presl at present consider to be male organs of fructification and indistinctly figured, have been more accurately examined by Prof. Link, and illustrated by drawings. They are long hollow filaments, separated by septa into articulations, generally simple, rarely ramified; the last articulation is thicker, and filled with a delicate granular mass. It may also at times be observed that this mass is exuded at the last articulation, and surrounds this as a crust. These parts are frequently longer than the capsules, and are easily distinguished from the young capsules. It is certainly probable that they are the stamina of ferns, and Prof. Link has indeed found them, after frequent search, in most of the ferns which he subjected to microscopical examination. The germination of ferns is simple; the shell of the seed bursts regularly or irregularly, out of which the embryo grows forth in a foliaceous expansion, which subsequently first forms a bud, whence the plant proceeds in the form which it retains. This mode of germination presents, therefore, a similarity to that of monocotyledons, only that here the evolution of the embryo is a state, and one of rapid transition.

*POTAMOGETON PRÆLONGUS.*

This rare plant occurs plentifully in the river Waveney, which divides Norfolk from Suffolk, in the neighbourhood of Harleston and Bungay, where I gathered it in June last. The only other station, to the south of the Tweed, is in ditches near Caversham Bridge near Reading, where it was found by Mr. Borrer in May 1836.—CHARLES C. BABINGTON.

THE COCOS DE MER.

The singular plant known by the above title was for many years a source of inquiry, and gave rise to some most absurd and monstrous conjectures. Its gigantic fruit was occasionally picked up floating at sea, and sometimes carried by the currents to various shores of the Indian ocean. Astonishing virtues were attributed to it, and were supposed to be communicated to medicines drunk out of its



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